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Weather for Ionia
 Cloudy
 Time: 7:30 pm
 Temp: 28
 RealFeel Temp:® 28
 Humidity: 93
 Winds: W at 4 mph
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Rosie Holidays Hubbardston family adopts a daughter on Michigan Adoption Day

By LAURA RICO
 Sentinel-Standard writer

IONIA — Little Rose Marie, at nine-and-a-half months old, officially became the 10th member of the Fahey family in an Ionia County courtroom Tuesday morning.

Bob and Laura Fahey, of Hubbardston, had seven children between them, some from first marriages, others from their current one, and to have another child was a wish neither could ignore.

After Laura had their youngest daughter, who is now 12 years old, both she and Bob knew they weren't done having children. She experienced more than one miscarriage, and the couple decided to try adoption.

In June 2004, the Faheys began their journey, which culminated Tuesday with the adoption of Rose, a bi-racial girl with large brown eyes and curly brown hair.

The Fahey's first step was to undergo a home study. During the homestudy case worker Brenda Ruddy of Adoption Associates in Jenison met with the family and got to know them personally, as well as perform background checks on both Bob and Laura.

The Faheys expressed interest in adopting an African-American or bi-racial child because adoption agencies have a difficult time placing those children in adoptive homes.

As part of the home study, Ruddy asked the Faheys questions about how they might handle raising an African-American or bi-racial child in a

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pre-dominately caucasian area such as Hubbardston.

Laura said she and her husband thought a great deal about the issues that may arise.

The Faheys home-school their children and are part of a home-schooling group that includes other adopted children of color.

“Her godparents are a bi-racial couple,” Laura said, “and they have seven children.”

Ruddy said Adoption Associates offers programs for parents in trans-racial adoptions, such as how to care for hair of an African-American child.

The next step in the adoption process, after the home study, was to prepare a profile for the family. The profile provided information about the Faheys, such as their practices and beliefs.

An expecting mother who is planning to give her child up for adoption may review the profiles and choose a family that she would like to have raise the child.

“We’re a home-schooling family,” Bob said. “That was one of the things the birth mother enjoyed seeing about us.”

The Faheys met with Rose’s birth mother, a Jackson woman, for only five hours. After she gave birth to Rose in February, the baby went home with the Faheys from the hospital.

Just over nine months later, the Fahey’s littlest girl was officially declared Rose Marie Fahey on Michigan Adoption Day, a day set aside to create awareness of the importance of adopting a child.

During the hearing, presided over by Ionia County Probate Court Judge Robert Sykes Jr., Bob, Laura and other present family members took a moment to express their feelings for Rose.

Bob said, while holding his daughter in his lap, “I’m 64 years old, and this child has brought me more joy than all my 64 Christmas’ combined.”

Perhaps already becoming a “daddy’s girl,” Rose’s new brothers and sisters talked about how cute and sweet she is.

Sykes told the family Rose will look back on her adoption day as one of the most important days of her life. To celebrate the occasion, Sykes presented the family with a small cake, some balloons and a photograph that was taken just after the adoption was finalized.

Laura said the upcoming holiday season and Rose's first Christmas will be more relaxing knowing that the legal aspect of the adoption is complete.

Anyone interested in finding out more about adoption locally and internationally may contact Adoption Associates at (517) 327-1388.

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